



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 497

January Session, 2019

Substitute House Bill No. 7292

House of Representatives, April 8, 2019

The Committee on Labor and Public Employees reported through REP. PORTER, R. of the 94th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL WORKER TITLE PROTECTION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2020*) (a) No person shall (1)
2 use the title "social worker" or any initials associated with such title, or
3 (2) advertise services described as clinical social work, as defined in
4 section 20-195m of the general statutes, unless such person has (A)
5 attained a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work from a
6 program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education, or (B)
7 attained a doctoral degree in social work.

8 (b) The Commissioner of Public Health or his or her duly authorized
9 representative shall notify any person who is violating the provisions
10 of subsection (a) of this section to cease using the title of social worker
11 or any initials associated with such title, or to cease advertising
12 services described as clinical social work. Such notice shall also be sent
13 to the employer of such person, if applicable.

14 (c) Nothing in this section shall prevent any person employed by the
15 state of Connecticut prior to July 1, 2019, with a title in the social work
16 series of the classified service from using a title in such series to
17 describe or perform his or her duties in the course of his or her
18 employment with the state of Connecticut. The state of Connecticut
19 may employ social work trainees and social workers who do not hold
20 a social work degree at the time of hire and such employees may use
21 the title social worker trainee or social worker if such hires attain a
22 master's degree in social work from a program accredited by the
23 Council on Social Work Education or a doctoral degree in social work
24 not later than five years after their date of employment with the state
25 of Connecticut.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>January 1, 2020</i>	New section
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LAB *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which makes statutory changes concerning the use of the title "social worker" or any initials associated with such title, is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact to the State or municipalities.

The Out Years

State Impact: None

Municipal Impact: None

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 7292*****AN ACT CONCERNING SOCIAL WORKER TITLE PROTECTION.*****SUMMARY**

This bill prohibits anyone from using the title “social worker,” or any associated initials, or advertising clinical social work services, unless the person has (1) a bachelor’s or master’s degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)-accredited program or (2) a doctoral degree in social work.

By law, the Department of Public Health (DPH) licenses both master and clinical social workers, each of which require at least a master’s degree in social work and a specified number of clinical training hours. Thus, the bill conflicts with existing law by allowing a person to advertise clinical social work services with only a bachelor’s degree and without obtaining the training hours required for social work licensure (see COMMENT).

Existing law already prohibits anyone who is unlicensed from using the title of licensed master or clinical social worker or advertising services as such.

The bill also requires the DPH commissioner or his representative to notify violators and, if applicable their employers, to cease using the social worker title or advertising clinical social work services.

Additionally, the bill exempts from the prohibition anyone employed by the state before July 1, 2019, with the title in the social work series of classified state service (see BACKGROUND). Existing law already allows any person employed by the state prior to October 1, 1996, with the title in the social work series of the classified service to have such a title to describe or perform his or her duties (CGS § 20-

195r).

It also allows the state to hire social work trainees and social workers who do not have a social work degree at the time of hire and allow these employees to use the title of “social worker trainee” or “social worker” if they attain a (1) master’s degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program or (2) doctoral degree in social work within five years after their employment date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2020

BACKGROUND

Social Work Series in State Service

The following job titles are included in the Department of Administrative Services’ social work series of classified state service:

1. clinical social worker,
2. clinical social worker associate,
3. social work – case aide,
4. social worker – health care professional,
5. social worker – social and human services, and
6. social worker trainee.

Related Bill

sHB 7198, favorably reported by the Public Health Committee, generally prohibits anyone from using the title “social worker” or advertising services as a social worker unless he or she has a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree in social work from a CSWE-accredited program.

COMMENT

Conflict with Social Work Licensing Provisions

The bill conflicts with existing state law by allowing a person to

advertise clinical social work services with only a bachelor's degree. By law, licensed clinical and master social workers must (1) attain at least a master's degree in social work, (2) pass an examination, and (3) for clinical social workers, complete at least 3,000 post-graduate training hours (CGS §§ 20-195n(c) and 20-195q(b)).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 10 Nay 3 (03/21/2019)